

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SY-04 SCCT-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-01

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 FBIE-00

USSS-00 OPR-01 NIC-01 ARAE-00 /053 W

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O 301642Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6120

INFO AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L NASSAU 1822

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC BF

SUBJ: ALLEGED PLOT TO KIDNAP AMBASSADOR

REF: RIDGWAY/HIGH TELCONS 10-29 AND 10-30-74

SANTO DOMINGO FOR RSO

1. CONFIRMING INFORMATION RELAYED TO DEPARTMENT IN REFERENCED TELCONS, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF POLICE (AND CHIEF, SPECIAL BRANCH) COURNEY STRACHAN CALLED ON DCM AFTERNOON OF 10-29-74 TO REPORT ON ALLEGED PLOT TO KIDNAP AMERICAN AMBASSADOR WHICH POLICE HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING SINCE THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24. STRACHAN SAID THAT POLICE CRIMINAL DIVISION HAD BEEN INFORMED BY YOUNG MAN CHARGED WITH SEVERAL CRIMES THAT HE HAD ATTENDED MEETINGS OF TWENTIETH CENTURY REVOLUTIONARIES (TCR) GROUP AT WHICH PLANS WERE LAID TO KIDNAP AMBASSADOR SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26 WHEN HE ATTENDED CLOSING BANQUET OF ANNUAL PLP CONVENTION.

2. FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF INFORMATION, POLICE COMMISSIONER SALATHIEL THOMPSON CONVENED A TASK FORCE OF HIS SENIOR OFFICERS INCLUDING ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS PAUL THOMPSON, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER STRACHAN, AND
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ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR NEW PROVIDENCE PAUL HANNA. THE

GROUP DECIDED THAT INCREASED PROTECTION MUST BE GIVEN AMBASSADOR AND AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE. IN THE COURSE OF ARRANGING THAT PROTECTION, POLICE LEARNED AMBASSADOR WAS OFF THE ISLAND AND NOT SCHEDULED TO RETURN UNTIL TUESDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 29. POLICE MADE ARRANGEMENTS WITH INFORMANT TO MEET AGAIN SATURDAY, 10-26, TO BE GIVEN FINAL DETAILS ON HOW KIDNAP PLOT WAS TO BE CARRIED OUT. IN THAT MEETING, INFORMANT SAID KIDNAP ATTEMPT HAD BEEN POSTPONED BECAUSE MEMBERS OF GROUP DID NOT KNOW WHERE US AMBASSADOR LIVED.

3. STRACHAN SAID POLICE DECIDED THAT BEST LINE OF INVESTIGATION WOULD BE TO DETERMINE WHETHER MEMBERS OF TCR IDENTIFIED BY INFORMANT HAD ARMS OR OTHER MATERIALS IN THEIR RESIDENCES WHICH COULD TIE THEM TO A KIDNAP PLOT. ACCORDINGLY, FOUR MEN WERE PICKED UP OVER THE PERIOD SATURDAY, 10-26 TO MONDAY, 10-28. THEY WERE INTERROGATED FOR APPROXIMATELY THREE HOURS EACH AND THEIR RESIDENCES WERE SEARCHED. POLICE OBTAINED NO INFORMATION OR EVIDENCE TO CONFIRM EITHER THAT A PLOT IN FACT EXISTED OR THAT THE FOUR NAMED BY THE INFORMANT WERE INVOLVED. ALL FOUR WERE RELEASED.

4. ACCORDING TO STRACHAN, POLICE AUTHORITIES CONSIDER THE THREAT AS "UNEVALUATED" AS YET. FACT THAT INFORMANT DID NOT KNOW AMBASSADOR WAS OFF THE ISLAND OR WHERE RESIDENCE IS LOCATED SUGGESTS STORY IS INVENTION INTENDED TO RESULT IN MORE LENIENT PUNISHMENT FOR CRIMES FOR WHICH HE IS CHARGED. ON THE OTHER HAND, AFTER 120 YEARS OF HAVING A CONSULATE HERE VERY FEW LOCAL BAHAMIANS REFER TO THE PRINCIPAL OFFICER AS "AMBASSADOR" BUT RATHER CONTINUE TO REFER TO HIM AS "CONSUL GENERAL". POLICE WERE SURPRISED THAT 19-YEAR OLD YOUTH OF INFORMANT'S BACKGROUND KNEW THERE WAS A US AMBASSADOR HERE AND REFERRED TO HIM BY HIS PROPER TITLE.

5. AS POLICE ARE UNABLE TO DISMISS THREAT BUT DO NOT HAVE EVIDENCE THAT WOULD ADD IN WEIGHT TO IT, THEY HAVE DECIDED TO ACT ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT IT IS REAL. ACCORDINGLY, EXTRA CONSTABLES HAVE BEEN ADDED TO WATCH THE RESIDENCE AND THEY ARE SUPPLEMENTED AT NIGHT BY ARMED PLAIN CLOTHESMEN. IN ADDITION, A FOLLOW-ON CAR HAS BEEN ASSIGNED TO THE AMBASSADOR AND WILL BE EMPLOYED UNTIL SUCH TIME AS POLICE FEEL THREAT

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NO LONGER EXISTS OR HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CONCLUDE ON THE BASIS OF FURTHER INVESTIGATION THAT PLOT WAS FANTASY ON THE PART OF THE INFORMANT.

6. FOUR MEN INTERROGATED BY POLICE CONCLUDED FROM LINE OF QUESTIONING THAT POLICE WERE PURSUING AN ALLEGED PLOT AGAINST AMBASSADOR. UPON BEING RELEASED THEY APPROACHED LOCAL PRESS, AND EVENING PAPER OF 10-29 AND MORNING PAPER OF 10-30 BOTH

HEADLINED ALLEGED KIDNAP PLOT. BOTH STORIES, HOWEVER, MADE
PLOT SECONDARY MATTER AND EMPHASIZED POLICE ACTION AGAINST
POLITICAL OPPONENTS OF GOVERNING PARTY, SUGGESTING POLITICAL
MOTIVATIONS WERE PRIMARY. REPORT ON PRESS COVERAGE FOLLOWS
SEPTTEL.

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